

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

INFORMATION

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

April 9, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL HAIG
FROM: JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE *JH*
SUBJECT: Dr. Kissinger's Meeting with the POW Families

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Mr. Smyser has received a call from Mrs. Cathy Plowman, who works here for the National League of Families and whose husband is missing in action over North Vietnam.

Mrs. Plowman was told by Mrs. Fuller, who attended Dr. Kissinger's two recent meetings with the POW/MIA families, that a recent article by a Florida columnist attacked Dr. Kissinger for his alleged "ignorance" of the POW issue.

The article, written by a reported right-wing columnist named Paul Scott, said that Dr. Kissinger had shown at the meeting that he did not know anything about the POW problem and that he and the President therefore were not concerned.

Mrs. Plowman said that the League of Families was very concerned about this article. The ladies do not know who might have talked to Mr. Scott, but they have respected Dr. Kissinger's desire that the meetings be off the record. They have valued the meetings and would like them to continue.

Apparently some of the wives were concerned because Dr. Kissinger turned to Mr. Smyser at one point to ask whether the North Vietnamese had signed the Geneva Convention. Mr. Smyser told Mrs. Plowman that he knew Dr. Kissinger did know that the North Vietnamese had signed the Geneva Convention; Dr. Kissinger, who has a lot of facts on his mind, was just checking this fact.

Before Dr. Kissinger's next meeting with the families, we shall send him a long paper giving more detailed background on the POW issue so as to avoid this kind of problem if possible. However, you may want to talk to Dr. Kissinger about this incident to see whether we should meet it head-on at the next session.